

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request (1) entry of the August 13, 2002 Amendment; (2) entry of the above claim amendments; (3) consideration of the attached Rule 312 Declaration; and (4) reconsideration followed by allowance.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 8 and 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Minghetti et al. (USP 5,415,931, hereinafter referred to as Minghetti '931). This rejection is traversed.

The resin sheet comprises resin layer (B) containing insoluble methyl methacrylate resin particles having a weight-average particle size of less than 100 μm , such as 1 to 33 μm . On the other hand, Minghetti '931 discloses a formed article containing particles having a size of 100 to 2,000 μm , which does not overlap the claimed range and is much larger than the claimed range.

The size of resin particles influences impact resistance of the resin sheet in the present invention. For example, too large particle size (specifically, of over 100 μm) deteriorates impact resistance of the resulting resin sheet (see, page 11, lines 13-14 of the specification).

When the particle size is within a the range, the resin sheet of the present invention has remarkably excellent impact resistance. Examples A, B and C of Mr. Maekawa 37 CFR 1.132 Declaration (attached hereto) actually demonstrate such preferable results. In the Examples A to C of the Declaration, resin sheets contain insoluble methyl methacrylate resin particles having a weight-average particle size of 35 μm or smaller (specifically, 12 μm , 20 μm and 35 μm in Examples A, B and C, respectively) and have high impact resistance which was expressed by large damage height (larger damage height means higher impact resistance of sheet, see, APPENDIX of the Declaration) of about 11 cm (specifically, 11.4 cm, 11.1 cm and 10.9 cm in Examples A, B and C, respectively).

On the other hand, as demonstrated in Comparative Example A of the Declaration, a resin sheet containing methyl methacrylate resin particles having a weight-average particle size of 50

μm has an impact resistance (i.e., damage height of 9.6 cm) lower than the resin sheets having particles with particle size of 35 μm or smaller in Examples A to C.

The claimed resin sheet contains insoluble methyl methacrylate resin particles having such a preferable particle-size range (specifically, a range of approximately 1 to 33 μm) in at least three layer structure described in the claim, while such a particle-size range and the advantages thereof does not appear to be disclosed in or suggested by Minghetti '931. Accordingly, the claimed invention is not anticipated by or nor obvious over Minghetti '931.

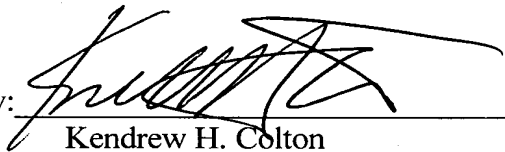
Claims 9-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Minghetti '931 and further in view of Hatakeyama et al., (USP 5,804,287, hereinafter, referred to as Hatakeyama '287). Claims 1, 2, 5 and 9-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hatakeyama '287 in view of Minghetti '931. These rejections are traversed as follows.

Hatakeyama '287 discloses an acrylic film containing polymer particles having a size of 0.2 to 0.4 μm , which does not overlap the claimed particle-size range (of 1 to 33 μm) and is much smaller than the claimed range. Hatakeyama '287 does not disclose or suggest the claimed particle-size range and the advantages thereof. In addition, as described above, Minghetti '931 also does not disclose or suggest the claimed particle-size range or the advantages thereof. Accordingly, the claimed invention is not obvious over Minghetti '931, over Hatakeyama '287 in view of Minghetti '931 or over Minghetti '931 in view of Hatakeyama '287.

Having addressed all matters, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure: Declaration of Tomohiro Maekawa Under 37 C.F.R. 1.132

APPENDIX

Amendments to existing claims:

1. (Amended) A laminated extruded resin sheet comprising a methyl methacrylate resin produced by laminating resin layers (B) on both surfaces of a resin layer (A) by a multilayer-extrusion molding method, the resin layer (A) comprising a methyl methacrylate resin, and the resin layer (B) being made by dispersing uniformly 1 to 50 parts by weight of insoluble methyl methacrylate resin particles having a weight-average particle size of [0.1] 1.0 to [100] 33 μm based on 100 parts by weight of a base resin comprising a methyl methacrylate resin.

18. (Amended) A laminated extruded resin sheet comprising a methyl methacrylate resin produced by laminating resin layers (B) on both surfaces of a resin layer (A) by a multilayer-extrusion molding method, the resin layer (A) comprising a methyl methacrylate resin, and the resin layer (B) being made by dispersing uniformly 1 to 50 parts by weight insoluble methyl methacrylate resin particles having a weight-average particle size of [0.1] 1.0 to [100] 33 μm based on 100 parts by weight of a base resin comprising a methyl methacrylate resin, wherein a layer thickness ratio of resin layer (B)/resin layer (A)/resin layer (B) is from 1/200/1 to 1/1/1, and wherein the base resin comprises 100 parts by weight of a methyl methacrylate resin and 5 to 70 parts by weight of a rubber-containing polymer.

New claims 22 and 23 are added.